

VZCZCXRO9630  
OO RUEHCI  
DE RUEHKT #3249/01 3540641  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 200641Z DEC 06  
FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4232  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 5151  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 5418  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 0589  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 3417  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 4782  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0697  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY 2929  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1382  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2250  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KATHMANDU 003249

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/20/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: ELECTION COMMISSION NEEDS USD 32.8 MILLION FOR  
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

REF: A. KATHMANDU 3081

[1](#)B. KATHMANDU 3217

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (SBU) On December 13, Nepal's Election Commission (EC), told international donors it would need an estimated USD 32.8 million would be needed for the preparation and conduct of the Constituent Assembly (CA) elections. After sharing EC-identified areas of priority need, the EC said it would expect the donors to organize themselves to respond. The EC emphasized that the electoral law describing the mandate of the EC itself and the voter registration law had to move forward immediately in order for the EC to begin the arduous task of voter registration to meet the June 2007 timeline for the CA elections. The UN has provided two technical advisors (on logistics and election laws) to the EC thus far, and 25 are mandated by the UN Security Council and will in January begin assisting the EC and its regional offices.

Identified Areas of Need

[1](#)2. (SBU) The Election Commission (EC), in meetings with international donors on December 13, identified close to USD 33 million in requirements for election support. This included USD 25.3 million for management and service support costs, including: 1) overall management and operation; 2) registration and polling staff training; 3) voter registration field operations; 4) polling and staff deployment costs; and 5) "other costs." Additionally, the EC requested USD 6.3 million for materials and equipment, including: 1) IT equipment; 2) multimedia equipment; 3) communication equipment; 4) miscellaneous equipment; 5) vehicles; 6) election materials; and 7) furniture. The EC also notionally budgeted USD 1.2 million for voter education. The USD 32.8 million total did not include estimates for election monitoring and observation or technical assistance. In subsequent e-mails, UN technical advisor Bruce Hatch circulated to donors his complete list of specific materials and equipment needed.

## Election Commission and Voter Registration Laws Must Move Forward

---

¶3. (SBU) The Commission reported that, of the five necessary Electoral Laws, some, including the law mandating the Election Commission, were nearly ready for consideration. The Election Commissioners reiterated that, without the interim constitution, the legislation would not move forward. The Commission emphasized that two laws, the law describing the mandate of the EC itself and the voter registration law, had to be passed immediately so the EC could begin the arduous task of voter registration to meet the June 2007 timeline for the CA elections. The EC noted that there was some discussion regarding whether the current parliament could enact these particular laws without waiting for the interim constitution. (Note: We have been told by Speaker Nemwang and Election Commissioners that the current parliament could pass the necessary legislation; the Maoists have publicly opposed this proposal, however. End Note.)

### The Challenge of Voter Registration

---

¶4. (SBU) The EC said that, even without the voter registration laws, some initial programs on voter registration were progressing, including a training program on registration for potential staff. Donors asked the EC about the relationship between the voter registration law and the recently signed Citizenship Rights Act. The EC said the Citizenship Law posed a dilemma. The EC said they were working to identify a way in which people who were declared

KATHMANDU 00003249 002 OF 003

citizens under the new law after the close of registration but before the balloting process would still be able to vote and had asked the eight parties to assist in determining a mechanism for addressing this issue. The EC also said it would identify a mechanism to provide internally displaced persons (IDPs) with voting rights and hoped that this issue would be addressed in voter registration law.

### Election Commission Wants "Maximum Number" of Election Observers Deployed

---

¶5. (SBU) The Election Commission said it hoped the international community would deploy the maximum possible number of election observers, both international and national. Because of a potential conflict of interest, the EC would not coordinate election observation missions. However, the EC clarified, it would provide guidelines for observers and handle technical issues such as badging and registering observers. The Election Commission also described the "sweet and sour" experience Nepal had in the past with domestic monitors and said the EC planned to develop guidelines for domestic monitors to encourage their responsible and neutral participation in the election process.

### Martin Clarifies UN Role in Election Process

---

¶6. (SBU) Ian Martin, the UN Secretary General's Special Representative to Nepal, described a three-phase UN process of assistance to the CA elections. First, Catinca Slavu, his election advisor, had been able to respond quickly to the EC's technical assistance requests, including deploying legal and logistical UN support on a short-term basis. Second, he said, the UN Security Council had authorized 25 electoral personnel for Nepal. Ten of these would provide technical assistance to the Election Commission in Kathmandu, with the remaining 15 to be deployed to five regional centers to assist with district-level election support. Martin said New York was working to identify and deploy these individuals as soon as possible. (Note: In conversations with Emboffs,

Slavu said the first wave of UN election advisors would arrive in late January at the earliest. Also, 75 additional UN representatives may be deployed at the district level for election support. End Note.) Finally, Martin said the UN, with a technical assessment mission currently in Kathmandu, was determining the full concept of a UN operation in Nepal of which election support would be a component.

#### EC Passes Donor Coordination to the Donors

-----

17. (SBU) The EC said that now that it had identified areas of priority need, it was looking to the donors to organize themselves to respond, including forming sub-groups as necessary. In some areas, including the list of logistical needs identified by the UN-supported logistical assessment, the UN (Slavu) agreed to assist in ensuring donors did not duplicate efforts. The UN would also coordinate any offers of technical assistance to the Election Commission. Beyond these areas, donor coordination mechanisms were unclear. The EC said there were multiple ways in which donors could contribute funds, including through participation in the Ministry of Finance's (MOF) Peace Fund, bilateral support to the EC through the MOF, and direct support for general needs such as voter education, civil education, and election monitoring.

#### Comment

-----

18. (C) The Election Commission will need significant international investment to pull off Constituent Assembly elections by June 2007. The EC will look to the U.S., a historic and trusted partner, for support, and we hope to mobilize additional funds to respond (Ref B). The Election Commission has made some progress, with the help of UN

KATHMANDU 00003249 003 OF 003

technical advisors, in comprehensively identifying areas of need. However, as recently as a day ago, it was still paralyzed, awaiting the promulgation of the interim constitution and the passage of necessary legislation. Now that the GON and the Maoists have agreed on an interim constitution, it should be possible to use the existing parliament to enact the required legislation -- if the Maoists do not block the process. Voter registration efforts must begin immediately for CA elections to meet the June 2007 deadline. We will encourage the UN to take on a more comprehensive donor coordination role to help avoid donor duplication and ensure that aid is properly targeted.

MORIARTY